



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
Administration for Children and Families  
Administration on Children, Youth & Families  
Family and Youth Services Bureau



# THE EXCHANGE



News from FYSB and the Youth Services Field

January 1998

## A Look at Juvenile Justice in America

A revolution in social justice has been occurring across America during the past few years. The Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDP A) of 1974, as amended, has been up for reauthorization for nearly 2 years. At the same time, many States have been modifying their juvenile justice policies. Past and present research indicates that these changes may not be good news for young people, families, or communities.

The reality is that fear of crime is the driving force behind changing youth policy in America. Many citizens believe that crime is on the rise and that juvenile “predators” are taking over major cities and moving out into the suburbs. The data, however, paint a different picture:

- Of all juvenile arrests in 1994, 6 percent were for a violent crime.
- The juvenile violent crime arrest rate decreased 4 percent in 1995. The juvenile murder arrest rate decreased 23 percent between 1993 and 1996.
- In 1994, 82 percent of counties experienced no juvenile homicides.

In fact, delinquency is down and most young people are doing quite well. They are in school, working part-time or full-time, and planning for their futures. Youth from disadvantaged or abusive circumstances are finding their way to services, supports, and opportunities that are enabling them to begin refocusing their lives.

In part, the dichotomy between public perception and reality regarding juvenile delinquency is fueled by misinformation and misunderstanding. The challenge today is to begin providing a more accurate analysis of

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## FYSB Forum Focuses on Juvenile Justice Issues

Across the country, States and local communities are rethinking juvenile justice policy and practice at the same time that the U.S. Congress debates the reauthorization of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDP A) of 1974. At this critical juncture, the Family and Youth Services Bureau (FYSB) hosted a forum that focused on the history of the JJDP A and related issues.

Through its Forum on Juvenile Justice, held August 20, 1997, in Washington, D.C., FYSB facilitated presentations by staff from the Youth Law Center on the accomplishments of the JJDP A, the continuing need for refinements in juvenile justice systems, and the likely outcomes of dismantling the protections created

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the facts about what young people need, the troubles some experience, and the best approaches for reducing the chances that those troubling experiences will lead to involvement in delinquency.

***A Need for Services***

While most American youth are prospering today, there are young people who need our help. In many communities, the services that might move these youth into better situations simply do not exist. In other communities, children and youth are falling through the cracks of community systems suffering from operational failures and funding streams that bind the hands of those who direct resources locally. Competition by local agencies for funding, driven by the best intentions, further fragments the rather limited capital available.

Once these systems have failed, young people often end up in justice systems driven by the public's fear of crime. That fear is driving "back-end" approaches to juvenile justice policy and practice, which so far have increased costs, decreased the probability of reducing recidivism, and limited our capacity to steer young people in the right direction.

During a time when our leadership is searching for answers to

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the problems of juvenile crime and numerous other social questions, it is perhaps instructive to revisit the history of our efforts to both prevent juvenile delinquency and support young people in America.

***Federal Leadership in Action: The Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974***

More than 20 years ago, the Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency of the Senate Committee on the Judiciary, U.S. Congress, passed the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974.

The act had two primary goals. First, it was designed to improve the treatment of young people entering the justice system. Second, it created a system of care for status offenders outside the traditional justice system.

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), within the U.S. Department of Justice, was designated as the organization responsible for achieving the first goal. The second goal was addressed by Title III of the JJDP, the Runaway Youth Act (today the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act), which assigned responsibility to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) for creating a new system of care for runaway youth. Today, the Family and Youth Services Bureau (FYSB), DHHS, administers the programs funded under that section of the legislation.

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## ***Improving Juvenile Justice Systems***

To accomplish its proposed mission of improving juvenile justice systems and thereby the treatment of young people involved in those systems, Congress created a program, through the JJDP, that provided formula grant funding to States that agreed to comply with three key mandates:

- "...juveniles who are charged with or who have committed offenses that would not be criminal if committed by an adult ... shall not be placed in secure detention facilities or secure correctional facilities..."
- "...juveniles alleged to be or found to be delinquent and youths [who have committed status offenses] shall not be detained or confined in any institution in which they have contact with adult persons incarcerated because they have been convicted of a crime or are awaiting trial on criminal charges or with the part-time or full-time security staff (including management) or direct-care staff of a jail or lock-up for adults..."
- "...no juvenile shall be detained or confined in any jail or lockup for adults, [except]... with regard to the detention of juveniles accused of nonstatus

offenses who are awaiting an initial court appearance..."

The OJJDP administered the formula grant funding, as well as subsequent resources (such as those that provided for delinquency prevention through Title V of the act, as amended),

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monitored State compliance with the mandates, and provided training and technical assistance to the States. In each State accepting JJDP funding, a Juvenile Justice State Advisory Group, appointed by the Governor, oversaw distribution of those resources.

These groups and other local policymakers began with the premise that locking up young people in adult jails or lockups was inherently dangerous. Even detention facilities for youth are dangerous places, especially for status offenders. As data showed, youth in such situations were exposed to abuse and assault and, when isolated for their own protection, often became despondent and suicidal.

Moreover, the current overcrowded conditions of such facilities affect every aspect of their operation. Overcrowding typically shifts the institutional focus from treatment to custody, often precluding the adequate delivery of services, such as educational programs, counseling, and recreational activities.

Under the JJDP, therefore, most communities began exploring options for intervening early with young people. They created prevention programs, and procedures for diverting young people from possible incarceration into programs that both held youth accountable for their behavior and supported them in dealing with their problems.

This approach, now often called "restorative justice" or "balanced justice," serves the needs of the larger community by holding those who break the law responsible for paying back their specific victims (restitution) or the larger community (community service). Those acts of repayment enable young people to make amends, a process that appears critical, especially when helping youth understand their place in the community. The balanced justice approach also addresses the needs of the individual, especially young offenders who have been neglected or

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abused by parents and social institutions, through access to treatment and opportunities. Through mediation and community involvement, the balanced approach can help restore the public's faith in the justice system without harsh sentencing responses and the incumbent costs of unnecessary incarceration.

With funding from the JJDP, communities also sought new options for working with youth who had run away from home. The policymakers who enacted the JJDP understood that running away from home was more a cry for help than an antisocial act. Many youth who run away from home are running from physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, and many are neglected or asked to leave home.

Clearly, youth from these situations need and warrant attention. They do not belong in a jail cell or detention facility, settings in which they are likely to be abused or exploited. Their best interests, and those of the community, are far better served when they are placed in a homelike setting in which they can attend to their problems, explore opportunities to reconnect with their families, if appropriate, and work to redefine their futures.

### ***A New System of Care***

At the time of the passage of the JJDP, Congress recognized this need for a system of care for status offenders, one that would operate outside the traditional justice structure. So, concurrent to launching the OJJDP programs, FYSB began administering the Runaway and Homeless Youth

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Program, which provided funding to local communities through the Basic Center Program. The Basic Center Program began by supporting 66 local agencies to provide emergency shelter for runaway youth, to reunite them with their families, and to find alternative placements when reunification was not possible.

The program was established as a common-sense response to what most policymakers and practitioners knew: youth running from situations in which they were abused or neglected are not served best through juvenile justice systems. When detained through such systems, in fact, these youth are at high risk of further abuse; some

may attempt suicide. The goal of the Basic Center Program is to fund services that meet the immediate needs of runaway youth while staff attempt to reunite them with their families or assist them in finding appropriate alternative living situations.

To that end, the JJDP includes specific requirements of shelters. FYSB built on those requirements by creating program performance standards designed to ensure high-quality care. The program's structure and standards are unique in that they were designed in accordance with the lessons learned by youth service providers who already were working with the runaway population. The act and the performance standards include the following:

- Shelter accessibility through facilities that are located in areas "frequented by or easily reachable by" youth and that are open 24 hours a day.
- A homelike atmosphere, with shelters housing no more than 20 youth at a time and providing an adequate ratio of staff to young people.
- The delivery of services to meet young people's immediate (food and clothing) and long-term (education and job training) needs, either directly or by referral.



- A focus on reuniting young people with their families whenever possible, facilitated by a 2-week time limit on youth stays in shelters. Shelter staff also must contact young people's parents within the time frame established by State law. If no State requirement exists, shelter staff must contact a young person's parents within 72 hours (and preferably 24 hours) after the youth's arrival at the shelter.
- Counseling for youth and their parents, if appropriate and requested, to aid in determining whether youth can return home with adequate aftercare support or require an appropriate alternative living situation.
- Street outreach, promotion of services, and networking with other agencies and systems to ensure that youth are aware of available services and to maintain referral networks.
- The involvement of youth in the ongoing planning and delivery of services, such as through participation on agency boards of directors.
- Aftercare support and mechanisms for obtaining feedback from young people about the quality of services provided by the shelter.

The Basic Center Program now enables agencies in nearly 400 communities to provide support to runaway youth. Moreover, as a result of continued examination of the needs of those youth, FYSB

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first tested, and Congress later legislated, a program for serving older homeless youth who could not return home.

Today, that program, the Transitional Living Program for Older Homeless Youth (TLP), stands as one of the best developmental models for supporting young people from at-risk circumstances in moving toward independence.

### ***The JJDPA: Behind the Movement Toward a Youth Development Approach***

Key to reducing the public perception that youth crime is on the rise is the development of approaches that satisfy the cur-

rent wishes of most citizens: to continue this country's history of helping the less fortunate while decreasing the cost and negative consequences of social programming. Regardless of how accurate it is, the perception that social programs are tapping this country's resources and failing to make significant long-term change must be addressed. One clear way to do so is through a youth development approach.

More than 20 years ago, around the time that Congress began holding hearings on the JJDPA, juvenile justice and youth policy researchers and practitioners came together to design the positive youth development approach. Under the youth development approach, communities focus on what all youth need to move successfully through adolescence to adulthood, including the following:

- Prevention activities that help youth understand how certain behaviors can negatively affect their future
- Effective protective systems that monitor young people's safety and ensure swift intervention when they are at risk of abuse or neglect
- Parenting education for all parents and support for families that are addressing specific

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problems such as domestic violence or a lack of resources and access to opportunities

- Easily accessible services to support youth during challenging times
- Educational systems that allow for the different learning styles of young people and provide mentoring for those who experience special challenges
- Adult support and guidance through recreational and other activities in which youth learn and develop their social skills
- Opportunities for youth to contribute to the greater community while building skills and competencies
- Early intervention with youth who engage in acting-out behaviors that are symptomatic of problems that likely are beyond their capacity to address
- Community-wide support for youth and families through resources designed to support young people, strengthen families, and rebuild neighborhoods

Today, local communities across the country are laying the foundation for or strengthening existing public policies on the basis of the youth development approach. These actions are in large part attributable to the JJDP. The

OJJDP supports the youth development approach through funding opportunities designed to strengthen connections between youth and community. The agency also funds prevention and

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early intervention services and is teaming with other agencies to explore strategies for reducing young people's academic failures and preparing them to move from school to work.

Moreover, FYSB and its local grantee agencies are promoting the youth development approach at the national, State, and local levels. In big cities, suburbs, small towns, and rural areas, community leaders are joining together to explore how to reframe their youth policies and redesign local programs.

At the center of many of these efforts stands the FYSB TLP, one of the most effective models of youth development. The TLP was created by the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act Amendments of

1988 passed by Congress as part of the Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1988 (P.L. 100-690). Since 1990, local TLPs have offered young people without homes the services and opportunities they need to learn to live independently. Through the TLP, FYSB currently funds approximately 75 communities nationwide to provide residential services for up to 18 months (the maximum period allowed by legislative mandate) to older youth age 16–21 who are homeless or unable to return home.

During the past decade, FYSB and its TLPs have set new standards for serving young people through a developmental framework. The approach emphasizes providing youth with support in moving toward independence, holding them accountable for their actions within a compassionate context, and offering them opportunities to become contributing members of the larger community. The TLPs have found that as youth gain the opportunities, confidence, and skills to try new ventures or work toward dreams they had not thought attainable, they shift their decisionmaking framework from the short term to the long term. As their thinking becomes future oriented, youth naturally begin making short-range choices that preserve their dreams and goals.

The TLP is an example of the success that can occur through partnerships between the national and local levels under the JJDPa. Local youth agencies receiving FYSB Basic Center funding first identified the need for longer term care for youth who could not be reunited with their families and needed support to make the transition to self-sufficiency. FYSB then tested the concept of transitional living through its Research and Demonstration Program. Following the success of those early projects, Congress amended the JJDPa to create the TLP.

Today, in fact, there are few pieces of legislation that have resulted in the level of success that can be attributed to the JJDPa<sup>1</sup>:

- 55 of the 57 States and Territories are in compliance with the requirement that young people held in secure detention be separated from adults.
- 52 of the 57 States and Territories are in compliance with the requirement that young people be removed from adult jails and lockups.
- Whereas in 1974, approximately 500,000 young people were being held in adult jails

or lockups, that figure has decreased to approximately 60,000.

### ***Building on the JJDPa***

Americans have a long tradition of building upon earlier successes to ensure the continued growth and prosperity of the Nation. Outside the public policy arena,

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in fact, the process of research and testing, implementation, evaluation and replication, and further evaluation is the cornerstone of accomplishment.

Today, efforts to support young people, reduce delinquency, and rebuild the public's sense of safety and trust are connected in exciting and challenging ways. The choice ahead is whether to build on the successes of the JJDPa to enhance those efforts or to attempt to accomplish those goals through other methods.

The logical choice is to examine the facts about youth delinquency

in America, to consider the risk to young people if the protections of the JJDPa are reduced or eliminated, and to build on the accomplishments of the act during the past two decades.

Under the next reauthorization of the JJDPa, Congress has the opportunity to enhance the legislation so that it continues the exemplary work of the past 20 years and further refines our approach to preventing youth delinquency and supporting all young people. As the FYSB grantees have learned through many years of serving young people in vulnerable circumstances, such an approach would include the following:

- A comprehensive community-wide system for implementing an assessment and planning process based on the youth development approach.
- Linkages between the systems that support and intervene with children and youth, such as Head Start, child welfare and child protection, education, community programming, mental health, employment and training, and juvenile justice.
- Community-sponsored education for youth and families about the meaning of making positive contributions and being responsible in a range

<sup>1</sup>Statistics provided by the Youth Law Center.

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of critical roles, such as community member, employee, parent, family member, and spouse.

- Education, employment, and training programs that prepare youth for work in marketable areas.
- Systems for detecting and intervening early with young people who are being abused.
- Nonlabeling systems that provide for early assessment of young people who are beginning to experience difficulties or become involved in behaviors that put them at risk.
- A system of care for status offenders that is outside the traditional law enforcement system. Such a system should ensure their short-term safety while providing services that move them into permanent long-term placements in a safe environment or help them move to independence.
- Improved, nonincarcerative options for intervening early with status offenders to improve the supports they receive and to minimize parental frustration with systems that refuse to help them until their child has broken the law.
- Improved, nonincarcerative options for intervening early with young people who,

because of their circumstances, engage in chronic delinquent behaviors. Such interventions would both provide these youth with opportunities, supports, and services *and* hold them accountable for their actions.

- Prevention and intervention services that are of sufficient duration to effect positive change in young people's lives.


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***FYSB grantees cite the need for a continuum of care for young people across the country.***

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- Use of diversion programs to prevent unnecessary incarceration and to reduce juvenile facility overcrowding.
- Provision of counseling, drug treatment, and education and employment training services in juvenile facilities.
- Juvenile facility infrastructures that are structurally sound.
- Concrete approaches to addressing the overrepresentation of minority youth in juvenile justice systems.
- A balanced approach to preventing young girls' involvement in, and ensuring their appropriate treatment by, juvenile justice systems.

- Identification of the small population of young people whose involvement in serious and violent delinquency poses a threat to the community, and provision of sustained intensive interventions that get these young people back on the right track while protecting the well-being of community members.
- Strong systems of aftercare.
- Systems for identifying and sharing best practices between communities, and access to training and technical assistance to continually enhance how services and opportunities are offered to young people.
- Strategies for creating a sustained system of financial support for youth development services at the local level.

With these elements, the new JJDPa could serve as a catalyst for creating a continuum of care in communities across the country. By maintaining the protections generated by the mandates, encouraging improved linkages between systems, and enabling the continued development of innovative prevention and early intervention practices, we can enable communities to continue the progress of the last two decades. 



## *The Need for the JJDP*


Protecting children and youth has always been the primary focus of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDP) of 1974. Under the legislation, many communities have made significant progress in diverting young people from incarceration. And when such diversion is not possible, they have improved the conditions under which they hold young people. While it is important to understand the benefits of the JJDP, it is equally important to acknowledge the harm that could again become commonplace without the protections established by the act. The following true stories were cited by staff of the Youth Law Center during the Family and Youth Services Bureau (FYSB) Forum on Juvenile Justice, August 20, 1997:

- A 15-year-old boy, who had no record or prior involvement in the juvenile justice system, was arrested for stealing a dirt bike from another youth. The guards put him into a jail cell with a 17-year-old male who had been convicted of five felonies involving violence. The guards did not return for 3 hours. Within the first 30 minutes of being placed in the cell, the 15-year-old (who weighed 100 pounds) was

sexually assaulted by the 17-year-old.

- A 15-year-old girl, as a prank, took a 2-hour drive in a boy's car without the boy's knowledge. When the girl's parents discovered that she was missing, they went to the police. The police told the parents that she might be a runaway and advised them to sign a runaway warrant, which permitted the authorities to take the girl into custody when they found her.

About 2 hours later, the girl returned home voluntarily. Although she was an "A" student, was a member of the State championship marching band, and had never been in trouble with the law, the local juvenile court judge ordered her to appear in court. The judge charged her with being a runaway and ordered her held in jail for 5 days. While showering in jail, she was insufficiently hidden by a shower curtain that was too narrow for the shower and was, therefore, watched by 15 jeering adult men who were being held in the cell across from the shower. On the fourth night of her incarceration, the girl was raped by a jail guard. In her cell, another youth had written, "Jesus help me. They are killing us here."

- A juvenile detention facility, which resembled a jail because of its hard lock construction and metal doors, was so overcrowded that many youth had 1 hour or less of schooling daily and spent up to 18 hours a day locked in rooms that were not air-conditioned. Young people in the facility slept on beds separated by only 12–18 inches or on mattresses on the floor. Each child was given one sheet and a wool blanket, but not a pillow. Many of the rooms had no toilets, so that youth had to knock on the door to get the staff's attention if they wanted to go to the bathroom. If the staff did not hear the knocking or did not respond to it (which occurred often), the children were forced to urinate in holes in the floor tiles, in the recessed areas of the windows, or on the floor.
- Juveniles in a State training school reported being hog-tied, a means of restraint they referred to as "the rocking chair." The children said that, as they lay on their stomachs with their hands behind their backs and their legs bent, staff put handcuffs on their hands and ankles and joined the two sets of handcuffs. They were left in this position for several hours. 

## About the Youth Law Center

The Youth Law Center was founded in 1978 to “preserve and protect the rights, health, and lives of children at risk.” Youth Law Center programs specifically focus on the problems of low-income and underserved children and youth, especially those who are incarcerated or removed from the care of their families.

The center’s goal is to intervene on behalf of these children and youth with the intent of creating change for all children. Since its inception, center staff have worked with public officials and others in more than 40 States to improve policy and practice in the juvenile justice, child welfare, and mental health and education arenas. The center has litigated successfully in 16 States on behalf of children whose rights have been violated in the juvenile justice and child welfare systems.

Youth Law Center staff also are involved in public education and training and technical assistance activities. Below are examples of the center’s special projects:

- An assessment of public defender services for youth in the juvenile justice system, in conjunction with the the Juvenile Law Center in Philadelphia and the American Bar Association’s Juvenile Justice Center. The Youth Law Center subsequently

produced *Call for Justice*, which documents the results of that assessment. One of the key recommendations of this assessment project was to develop training programs for public defenders and other juvenile court personnel.

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***The center’s goal is to intervene on behalf of individual children and youth with the intent of creating change for all children.***

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Today, the three organizations, with a 3-year grant from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, are operating the Juvenile Court Personnel Training Project. The project team will develop a curriculum for training judges, prosecutors, public defenders, and probation staff who are working in the juvenile court. Part of the curriculum will address child and adolescent development.

- A leadership summit for juvenile court public defenders, which the center conducted in October 1997. The summit brought together about 150 public defenders from rural

and urban areas to develop a plan of action for institutionalizing best practices in juvenile court systems.

- Management of a juvenile detention alternatives initiative funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation to address the issue of overcrowding in juvenile detention facilities. The center has provided technical assistance to five sites to assist them in developing strategies for reducing the use of secure confinement for young people and for improving conditions for youth who are in detention. The sites are New York, Chicago, Portland, Sacramento, and Milwaukee.
- Administration of another Casey Foundation-funded project focusing on improving linkages between health and mental health service providers and juvenile justice systems. The goal of the project is to encourage the diversion of youth from detention to community-based organizations that provide health and mental health services. In addition, the linkages may result in improved health and mental health services for youth who are detained in juvenile facilities.



## Resources on Juvenile Justice Issues

The following publications provide data on key issues in juvenile justice:

***The Transfer of Juveniles to Criminal Court: Does It Make a Difference?***, 1996, reports the results of a 1987 comparison of recidivism among 2,738 juvenile offenders transferred to criminal court with that of a matched sample of juvenile offenders retained in the juvenile justice system. The researchers examined recidivism in terms of rates of reoffending, seriousness of reoffenses, and time to reoffense. By all of these measures, recidivism was greater among youth transferred to adult court than among youth who remained in the juvenile justice system. Authors: D. Bishop et al. In *Crime & Delinquency*, Vol. 42, No. 2: pp. 171–191. *Crime & Delinquency* (Vol. 42, No. 2) is available for \$18 from SAGE Publications, 2455 Teller Road, Thousand Oaks, CA 91320; 805/499-0721; E-mail: <order@sagepub.com>.

***Juvenile Offenders and Victims: A National Report***, 1995, presents data on juvenile victimization, juvenile delinquency, and U.S. juvenile justice systems. The report provides data on the characteristics of the U.S. youth population, victimization of juveniles,

juvenile offenders, U.S. juvenile justice systems, juveniles in the justice system, juvenile courts, and juveniles in correctional facilities. ***Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1996 Update on Violence***, 1996, and ***Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1997 Update on Violence***, 1997, the first and second updates to the *National Report*, provide data on juvenile victimization, juvenile offenders, and juveniles in correctional facilities. Author: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Department of Justice. Available free from the Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse, P.O. Box 6000, Rockville, MD 20850; 800/638-8736.

***Offenders Under Age 18 in State Adult Correctional Systems: A National Picture***, 1995, provides the results of a survey of State correction departments regarding their handling of youthful offenders. The report provides information on the age at which youthful offenders can be sentenced to adult correctional systems in each State, State policies on housing juvenile offenders in correctional facilities, programs for young offenders in adult correctional systems, and State legislation related to juvenile offenders. Author: National Institute of Corrections, U.S.

Department of Justice. 1995. In *Special Issues in Corrections*, No. 1 (February 1995): pp. 1–29. Available from the National Institute of Corrections Information Center, 1860 Industrial Circle, Suite A, Longmont, CO 80501; 800/877-1461.

***An Assessment of the National Incidence of Juvenile Suicide in Adult Jails, Lockups, and Juvenile Detention Centers***, 1980, presents the findings of a 1979 survey of 372 juvenile detention facilities, 786 adult jails, and 913 lockups. The survey included questions regarding the number of youth detained in those facilities under age 18 who committed suicide during 1978. The results showed a rate of suicide for youth in the surveyed adult jails and lockups that was substantially higher than for youth in the surveyed juvenile detention centers. Author: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Department of Justice. In *Juvenile Delinquency: A Justice Perspective*, Second Edition. Authors: R. A. Weisheit and R. G. Culbertson, pp. 125–134. *Juvenile Delinquency: A Justice Perspective* is available for \$16.95 from Waveland Press, Inc., P.O. Box 400, Prospect Heights, IL 60070; 847/634-0081. ◆◆◆

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through the act. The Youth Law Center works with State officials and others to improve policy and practice in the juvenile justice, child welfare, mental health, and education arenas (see p. 10). Staff of Federal agencies and national organizations concerned with issues related to youth attended the forum, which was coordinated by FYSB's National

Clearinghouse on Families & Youth (NCFY).

"The deinstitutionalization of status offenders mandated by the JJDP, and the services it created for runaway and homeless youth, have enabled us to begin developing a system of care for young people that protects them, addresses their needs, and

introduces them to opportunities through which they can build a better future," said Terry Lewis, FYSB Associate Commissioner. "Today, we are working to institutionalize a youth development approach through the more than 400 FYSB grantee youth agencies across the country." ◆◆◆

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